



LAMAR UNIVERSITY

Week 5: Reflection

Part 1: Site-Based Decision-Making

At the campus level, site-based decision making (SBDM) is a collaborative effort among professional staff, parents, and community members to improve student achievement by addressing the outcomes of all students and determining goals and strategies to ensure improvement. Under state law, the Site-Based Decision-Making Committee establishes and reviews campus educational plans, goals, performance objectives, and major classroom instructional programs.

Prior to completing this assignment, you will conduct two interviews—one with a member of the Site-Based Decision-Making Committee at your selected campus and the other with the campus principal. Your interview questions should address:

- The committee's makeup
- The use of formal agendas
- Topics typically discussed
- Level of perceived teamwork (group dynamics)
- Specific decision-making strategies
- Conflict-resolution techniques

Part 2: Next Steps

As we stressed in this course, campus improvement is an ongoing, continuous process. When a campus receives its summative data reports, then the improvement cycle should begin again immediately.

In your second reflection, you will reflect on the action plan you developed earlier. Use the following scenario to think about your action plan and how you can move that plan to another level.

“Move forward in time to the end of the school year. Imagine that you and your staff implemented the action plan, which resulted in increased student performance on the latest Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports. Your campus has moved a step closer to becoming Exemplary, and you want to maintain the momentum. What will you do now?”

Directions

1. Record your reflection in the form of two 150-word essays.
2. Use the guiding questions in each section to stimulate your thinking and guide your writing.
3. Write reflectively instead of in a question-and-answer style, and follow the guidelines for writing listed in each section.
4. Be very specific in outlining your next steps. Use bullits.

Rubric

Use this rubric to guide your work.

(ELCC 2.1a;2.2a,b,c;2.3a,b,c;3.1a;3.2 a,b;4.1a)

Tasks	Accomplished	Proficient	Needs Improvement	Unacceptable
Reflection	Completes both reflection assignment s using a minimum of 150 words in each reflection. Includes APA citations from the research and professional language. (10 points)	Completes both reflections assignment using fewer than 150 words in each reflection. Lacks citations from the research. (8 points)	Completes one reflection assignment using a minimum of 150 words. (7 points)	Did not submit reflection assignment. (0 points)
Responses and Mechanics	Few errors in grammar, spelling or punctuation. (5 points)			Multiple errors in grammar, spelling or punctuation. Responses lack clarity and depth. (0 points)

Reflection One: Site-Based Decision-Making

Remember, this is a journal entry. However, as with any scholarly writing, you should use:

- citations from the research when applicable.
- professional writing protocols.
- professional language.

- **What important information did you obtain about site-based decision making from your interviews with the SBDM member? The campus principal?**
- **What information from the interviews aligned with your understandings of site-based decision making?**
- **What surprised you about the information that was shared?**

Type your response in the space below.

Site-Based Decision Making (SBDM) is an important step for schools in the process of planning and making changes to affect student learning. In addition, state law requires a SBDM committee to assist in the establishment and review of campus educational plans, goals, performance objectives, and major classroom instructional programs. To get better insight into the committee's in my local district I interviewed a campus principal and a member of a SBDM committee.

The campus principal was knowledgeable about the committee and the state requirements to have a committee that meets a minimum of 4 times a year. However, she was honest in her portrayal of her campus committee as one that meets to evaluate the 'big picture', but critical decisions are made by the administrative team. This is a very hands-on administrator and she feels she has the pulse of her campus at all times and feels comfortable in making most decisions. The committee meets to evaluate test scores, existing and proposed programs, and increased means of differentiation. One pending issue has been the request of the staff is for common planning time for core subjects. In order to accomplish this the scheduling will have to be flexible, so the principal has tasked the SBDM committee to brainstorm and propose possible alternatives to the current schedule. The school is also a pilot school and receives training and support from the state to develop an authentic professional learning community. The team has been meeting regularly to plan and assess progress of the PLC.

The committee member expressed similar thoughts and perceptions of the role

and responsibility of the committee. There was some discrepancy in how often the committee met and how much of the critical issues pending for the school were really discussed. The committee member felt that some of what the committee accomplishes is more of the daily procedural tasks that require coordination of grade levels and timing for special events. They also indicated that although the principal is a team player and collaboration is important, perception of what really happens is somewhat dependent on the principal and needs that must be met on the day of the meeting. One area where both interviewees agreed was on the subject of teachers acting as coaches to empower others. It was apparent that not only did the principal believe that her staff had the power to make a difference but the committee member felt that the efforts of all the staff to make positive changes for student learning was one of the most important bi-products of the SBDM committee. The school is recognized as exemplary so it is apparent that good things are happening for kids. Both interviewees acknowledged the need and the desire to keep progress moving in a positive direction. Reeves references three compelling events to maintain success: teaching techniques must be researched based, success is the result of the consistent efforts of all of the educational team and third, the staff is represented by competent hard-working professionals that strive for excellence for every student (2007, p. 87). I think these techniques are being used but more intentional efforts need to be made to make a true site-based decision making committee.

Site-Based Decision Making is not a new concept to education but it is a concept that is being revitalized by the requirements of NCLB, state and local educational goals and objectives. An effective SBDM committee can establish clear consensus on topics of importance to all educational staff. This allows for clear action plans to be established that brings life to goals, objectives and strategies.

I think this campus is working hard to establish a true SBDM and is validated by the following statement, "Although final responsibility for school improvement falls to the principal, building culture can never be built through the sole efforts of the principal" (Zepeda, 2004, p. 43). This school is a good example of an environment where everyone is a team player and the principal is in the lead coaching position.

Reeves, D. (2007). How do you sustain excellence? *Educational Leadership*, 86-87.

Zepeda, S. J. (2004). *Instructional leadership for school improvement*. Larchmont: Eye on Education.

Reflection Two: Next Steps

Remember, this is a journal entry. However, as with any scholarly writing, you should use:

- citations from the research when applicable.
- professional writing protocols.
- professional language.

- **Think about your action plan from the Application assignment. What have you learned in this course about the continuous campus improvement cycle that will dictate your next steps?**

- **What will be your next steps in the continuous improvement process? How will you carry the action plan forward and maintain momentum? Outline and reflect on your next steps in this process.**

Type your response in the space below.

Liberty Hill Junior High is recognized as an Exemplary school. This recognition was achieved through the TPM adjustment made in the area of Science. The Site-Based Decision Making committee has met to evaluate the steps needed to continue the improvement students have been demonstrating with existing instruction. Continuous improvement must be guided by research proven methods and there must be consensus on the best way to implement change. The principal has tasked the committee to find something new to challenge both the students and the teachers. The goal is to establish a professional learning community that is as Jay McTighe references, committed to lifelong learning. He states, ". . . continuous learning is a hallmark of professionalism in any field and especially relevant to a profession devoted to learning" (2008, p. 6). Establishing an action plan for improvement requires the committee to continually question practices in order to find solutions.

One opportunity for professional development that has been identified is based on research into using more hands-on learning. Project Based Learning (PBL) is organized around an essential question. This creates a need to know content that can answer the question. This allows students to make inquiries to learn and create while using critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration and different forms of communication. The process allows for some degree of student choices and incorporates feedback and revision. Final projects are publicly presented allowing students to demonstrate knowledge learned. The Science staff and support personnel in grades 6-8 will receive a day long training using the PBL method with appropriate

follow-up and reflection of both the process and student progress to follow.

On-going reflection and assessment will need to include the following:

- Documentation of the student progress using formative and summative assessments as determined by the district.
- Examination of the strategies for effectiveness and appropriateness for the current group of students.
- Disaggregate all the data and make connections to goals, objectives and strategies.
- Modify goals, objectives and strategies
- Reflection continuously on what might be blocking progress

School improvement is exciting for all but most especially for the leadership in the school. It is the responsibility of the principal to mark and acknowledge both accomplishments and failures. "Effective leaders break the endless improvement journey into a series of short exciting trips. A key element of that is celebrating and savoring the successes" (Zepeda, 2004, p. 158). Max Fridell stipulates that a principal should create a clear vision for improvement that all staff can take ownership of. This is done by observing the current environment, assessing all stakeholder involvement, formulating ideas for improvement, activating an improvement plan and constantly reflecting on the progress and process (Fridell, 2006)

I am personally excited about proposing my action plan to the campus staff and seeing the improvements that will be made.

Fridell, M. E. (2006, October 2006). *The new principal's role in establishing a collaborative, progressive vision*. Retrieved June 21, 2011, from Connexions: <http://cnx.org/content/m14078/latest/>

McTighe, J. (2008, May). Making the most of professional learning communities. *The Learning Principal* 3(8) , pp. 1,4-8.

Zepeda, S. J. (2004). *Instructional leadership for school improvement*. Larchmont: Eye on Education.

E-portfolio assignments:

At the end of this course, you should have completed the following Course-Embedded Internship Logs:

EDLD 5333 Leadership for Accountability

- I-001 Vision and Campus Culture” Course-Embedded Internship Log 2
- II-004 Curriculum, Measurement, and Alignment of Resources” Course-Embedded Internship Log 1
- II-007 Decision Making and Problem Solving” Course-Embedded Internship Log 2
- III-008 Budgeting, Resources Allocation, and Financial Management” Course-Embedded Internship Log 2
- I-003 Integrity and Ethics“ Course-Embedded Internship Log 1

Continue to complete and post Campus-supervised internship reflection logs in the e-portfolio.
All course-embedded and campus-supervised logs must be completed by your 11th course in the program prior to the EDLD 5398 Internship course.